

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of failsoft operation, the method comprising:
providing a policy to a facility, the policy defining two sets of rules for handling database transaction approvals requested by the facility from a database at the time of a request for content download, a first set of rules governing normal operation when communication with the database is successful, and policy limits for transactions that normally require approval from a database at a time a transaction is requested, wherein the policy includes failsoft rules governing limited transaction approval to be used by the facility in the event of a communication failure between the facility and the database at a time of a ~~transaction~~ content download request, wherein the limited transaction approval includes a purchase cost limit;
determining that a communication failure exists between the facility and the database at a time of a ~~transaction~~ content download request; and
using, by a facility computing device, the failsoft rules to preliminarily grant approval for the requested transaction in response to determining that a communication failure exists between the facility and the database at the time of the ~~transaction request~~ download request.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
in response to resolution of the communication failure, transmitting an update from the facility to the database informing the database of the requested transaction.
- 3-4. (Canceled).
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the facility is a cable television headend.
- 6-7. (Canceled).
8. (Currently Amended) A method of failsoft operation comprising:

receiving, at a facility computing device, a set of failsoft rules, the rules defining a communication failure content download cost limit;

receiving a request for content at the facility;

attempting to communicate to an authorization computer a request for approval of the request for content;

determining that a communication failure has delayed or disrupted the process of obtaining approval of the request from the authorization computer; and

in response to the communication failure, approving or denying the request for content according to the facility's received set of failsoft rules.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 further comprising:

in response to resolution of the communication failure, transmitting an update from the facility to the authorization computer informing the authorization computer of the requested transaction.

10. (Canceled).

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the facility is a cable television headend.

12-17. (Canceled).

18. (Currently Amended) A content delivery ~~system~~method, comprising:

~~a plurality of headend facilities;~~

receiving, at a first computing device, a user request for downloading content, wherein access to the content requires the device to request authorization from a central facility database;
and

determining that a communication failure exists between the computing device and the central facility at the time of a content download request; and

granting limited approval to the request and limiting the download to a predetermined communication failure cost limit established in a communication failure content download failsoft rule.~~a central facility including a central database;~~

~~a distributed information technology (IT) architecture wherein a back office IT infrastructure is located at the central facility and wherein each headend facility includes a headend IT infrastructure; and~~

~~wherein at least one headend IT infrastructure is provided with a policy defining policy limits for transactions that normally require real-time access to the central database, and is programmed to handle real-time transactions, without real-time access to the central database, in accordance with the policy limits, wherein the at least one headend IT infrastructure is programmed to determine an availability of access to the central database, and in the event that access to the central database is unavailable, handle real-time transactions, without real-time access to the central database, in accordance with the policy limits, thereby providing failsoft headend facility operation.~~

19. (Currently Amended) The system-method of claim 18 wherein the receiving occurs at a~~at least one of the headend facilities is for a cable television system~~ headend.

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the central database is realized as a relational database.

21. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the central database is realized as an LDAP/X.500 directory.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the request for content is a request to view pay-per-view television content.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the request for content is a request to add service to a user's subscription plan.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the request to add service is a request to add one or more television channels to a television subscriber's subscription lineup.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining that the communication failure exists based on communication delay.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, further comprising the facility receiving periodic updates to the set of failsoft rules from the authorization computer.